

NOV 12 2010

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s) : RAPP ET AL. Confirmation No. : 2222
Application No. : 10/683,929 Group Art Unit : 2183
Filing Date : OCTOBER 9, 2003 Examiner : HUISMAN, D. J.
Docket No. : 1934-013-03 Customer No. : 00996
Title : PIPELINE ACCELERATOR THAT RECEIVES OR TRANSMITS
DATA VIA A MESSAGE, AND PROCESSES THE DATA WITHOUT
EXECUTING A PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

DRAFT OF PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENTS
FOR REFERENCE IN EXAMINER INTERVIEW

1. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the memory, including processing
pipelines, and operable, without executing a program instruction, to:

[[to]] receive a message that includes data and that includes a
header having information indicating at least one but fewer than all of the
processing pipelines by receiving the data and the information on at least one
common bus line,

[[to]] extract the data from the message,

[[to]] load the extracted data into the memory,

[[to]] retrieve the extracted data from the memory,

generate, from the information, an identifier indicating the at least
one processing pipeline without using a virtual address,

[[to]] process the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with
the indicated at least one processing pipeline ~~without first using a virtual address
corresponding to the indicated at least one processing pipeline,~~ and

[[to]] provide the processed data to an external source.

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2. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 1 wherein:
the memory is disposed on a first integrated circuit; and
the pipeline circuit is disposed on a second integrated circuit

3. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 1 wherein the pipeline circuit is disposed on a field-programmable gate array.

4. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 1 wherein the pipeline circuit is operable to provide the processed data to the external source by:
loading the processed data into the memory;
retrieving the processed data from the memory; and
providing the retrieved processed data to the external source.

5. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 1 wherein:
the external source comprises a processor; and
the pipeline circuit is operable to receive the data from the processor.

6. (Currently Amended) A computing machine, comprising:
a processor operable to broadcast a message that includes data and that includes a header having information identifying at least one but fewer than all destination pipelines of the data; and
a pipeline accelerator coupled to the processor and comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the memory, including at least one processing pipeline, and operable, without executing a program instruction:

to receive the message from the processor by receiving the data and the information via at least one same bus line,
to extract the data from the message,
to load the extracted data into the memory,
to retrieve the extracted data from the memory,

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to generate, from the information, an identifier indicating the
at least one destination pipeline without referencing a virtual address,

to process the retrieved data, in response to the identifier,
with the identified at least one destination pipeline ~~without first referencing
a virtual address corresponding to the identified at least one destination~~
pipeline, and

to provide the processed data to the processor.

7 (Previously Presented) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the memory and operable, without
executing a program instruction:

to receive data without receiving, with the data, information
corresponding to a post-processing destination of the data,

to generate an identifier indicating a processing pipeline without
using a virtual address,

to process the received data, in response to the identifier, with the
indicated processing pipeline,

to load the processed data into the memory,

to retrieve the processed data from the memory,

to generate a message header that includes first information
indicating a destination of the processed data,

to generate a message that includes the processed data and the
header; and

to provide the message to an external source.

8. (Previously Presented) A computing machine, comprising:
a processor operable to run at least one software application; and
a pipeline accelerator coupled to the processor and comprising:
a memory, and

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a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the memory and operable, without executing a program instruction:

to receive data from the processor without receiving, with the data, information corresponding to a post-processing destination of the data,

to generate an identifier indicating a processing pipeline without referencing a virtual address,

to process the received data, in response to the identifier, with the indicated processing pipeline,

to load the processed data into the memory,

to generate a message header that includes, for the processed data, information that indicates a destination software application running on the processor;

to retrieve the processed data from the memory,

to generate a message that includes the retrieved processed data and the message header, and

to provide the message to the processor.

9. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
first and second memories; and
a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and comprising:

an input-data handler operable without executing a program instruction to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having first information specifying at least one destination hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory ~~without first retrieving a virtual address corresponding to the at least one destination hardwired pipeline specified by the first information,~~

hardwired pipelines including the specified at least one destination hardwired pipeline and including at least one other pipeline, the specified at least

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one destination hardwired pipeline operable without executing a program instruction to process data,

a pipeline interface operable, without executing a program instruction to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, to generate from the first information an identifier indicating the at least one destination hardwired pipeline without using a virtual address, to provide the retrieved raw data to the at least one destination hardwired pipeline specified by the first information in response to the identifier, and to load processed data from the hardwired pipeline into the second memory, and

an output-data handler operable without executing a program instruction to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having second information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the second information to the external source via at least one same bus line.

10. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 9 wherein:

the first and second memories each include respective first and second ports;

the input-data handler is operable to load the raw data via the first port of the first memory,

the pipeline interface is operable to retrieve the raw data via the second port of the first memory and to load the processed data via the first port of the second memory, and

the output-data handler is operable to retrieve the processed data via the second port of the second memory.

11. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 9, further comprising:

a third memory coupled to the hardwired-pipeline circuit;

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wherein the hardwired pipeline is operable to generate intermediate data while processing the raw data; and

wherein the pipeline interface is operable to load the intermediate data into the third memory and to retrieve the intermediate data from the third memory.

12. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 9 wherein:

the first and second memories are respectively disposed on first and second integrated circuits; and

the pipeline circuit is disposed on a field-programmable gate array.

13. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:

first and second memories;

a hardwired-pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and comprising:

an input-data handler operable without executing a program instruction to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having first information specifying at least one destination hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory,

hardwired pipelines including the specified at least one destination hardwired pipeline and including at least one other pipeline, the specified at least one destination hardwired pipeline operable without executing a program instruction to process data,

a pipeline interface operable without executing a program instruction to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, to generate from the first information an identifier specifying the at least one destination hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address, to provide the retrieved raw data to the at least one destination hardwired pipeline specified by the first information in response to the identifier without using a virtual address, and to load processed data from the hardwired pipeline into the second memory, and

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an output-data handler operable without executing a program instruction to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having second information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the second information to the external source via at least one same bus line;

an input-data queue coupled to the input data handler and the pipeline interface;

wherein the input data handler is operable to load into the input data queue a pointer to a location of the raw data within the first memory; and

wherein the pipeline interface is operable to retrieve the raw data from the location using the pointer.

14. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:

first and second memories;

a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and comprising:

an input data handler operable to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information indicating at least one destination hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory,

hardwired pipelines including the indicated at least one destination hardwired pipeline and including at least one other hardwired pipeline, the at least one destination hardwired pipeline operable to process data without executing a program instruction,

a pipeline interface operable to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, generate from the information an identifier indicating the least one destination hardwired pipeline without using a virtual address, provide the retrieved raw data to the at least one destination hardwired pipeline indicated by

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~~the information in response to the identifier without referencing a virtual address,~~
and load processed data from the hardwired pipeline into the second memory,

an output data handler operable to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having first information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the first information to the external source via at least one same bus line, and

an output data queue coupled to the output data handler and the pipeline interface;

wherein the pipeline interface is operable to load into the output data queue a pointer to a location of the processed data within the second memory; and

wherein the output data handler is operable to retrieve the processed data from the location using the pointer.

15. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 9, further comprising:

wherein each of the input data handler, hardwired pipeline, pipeline interface, and output data handler has a respective operating configuration; and

a configuration manager coupled to and operable to set the operating configurations of the input data handler, hardwired pipeline, pipeline interface, and output data handler.

16. (Original) The pipeline accelerator of claim 9, further comprising:

wherein each of the input data handler, hardwired pipeline, pipeline interface, and output data handler has a respective operating status; and

an exception manager coupled to and operable to identify an exception in the input data handler, hardwired pipeline, pipeline interface, or output data handler in response to the operating statuses.

17. – 40. (Cancelled)

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41. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving at a location a message that includes data and that includes a header having information indicating a size of the message and indicating as a destination at least one but not all hardwired pipeline circuits at the location;

extracting the data from the message without executing a program instruction;

loading the extracted data into a memory without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the extracted data from the memory without executing a program instruction;

generating, from the information, an identifier indicating the at least one hardwired pipeline circuit without referencing a virtual address;

processing the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with the at least one destination hardwired pipeline circuit that is indicated by the information without executing a program instruction and without first retrieving a virtual address corresponding to the at least one destination hardwired pipeline circuit; and

providing the processed data to an external source without executing a program instruction.

42. (Original) The method of claim 41 wherein providing the processed data comprises:

loading the processed data into the memory;

retrieving the processed data from the memory; and

providing the retrieved processed data to the external source.

43. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving data without receiving, with the data, information corresponding to a post processing destination of the data;

generating an identifier indicating a hardwired pipeline circuit without using a virtual address;

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processing the received data, in response to the identifier, with [[a]] the indicated hardwired pipeline circuit without executing a program instruction;

loading the processed data into a memory without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the processed data from the memory without executing a program instruction;

generating a header having first information indicating a destination of the processed data without executing a program instruction;

forming a message from the header and the processed data without executing a program instruction; and

providing the message to an external source via a single bus without executing a program instruction.

44. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving at a location from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information indicating at least one but not all hardwired pipelines at the location;

extracting the raw data from the message without executing a program instruction;

loading the extracted raw data into a first memory without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the extracted raw data from the first memory without executing a program instruction;

generating, from the information, an identifier indicating a the at least one but not all hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address;

processing the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with the at least one hardwired pipeline indicated by the identifier information without executing a program instruction and without first using a virtual address corresponding to the at least one hardwired pipeline;

loading the processed data from the hardwired pipeline into a second memory without executing a program instruction;

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generating a second header having information indicating a destination of the processed data without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the processed data from the second memory without executing a program instruction;

generating a second message that includes the processed data and the second header without executing a program instruction; and

providing the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the information to the external source via at least one same bus line without executing a program instruction

45. (Original) The method of claim 44 wherein:

loading the raw data comprises loading the raw data via a first port of the first memory;

retrieving the raw data comprises retrieving the raw data via a second port of the first memory;

loading the processed data comprises loading the processed data via a first port of the second memory; and

providing the processed data comprises retrieving the processed data via a second port of the second memory

46. (Original) The method of claim 44, further comprising:

generating intermediate data with the hardwired pipeline in response to processing the raw data;

loading the intermediate data into a third memory; and

providing the intermediate data from the third memory back to the hardwired pipeline.

47. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving at a location from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information indicating at least one but not all hardwired pipelines at the location;

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extracting the raw data from the message without executing a program instruction;

loading the extracted raw data into a first memory without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the extracted raw data from the first memory without executing a program instruction;

generating, from the information, an identifier indicating the at least one but not all hardwired pipeline without using a virtual address;

processing the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with the at least one hardwired pipeline indicated by the information-identifier without executing a program instruction;

loading the processed data from the hardwired pipeline into a second memory without executing a program instruction;

generating a second header having information indicating a destination of the processed data without executing a program instruction;

retrieving the processed data from the second memory without executing a program instruction;

generating a second message that includes the processed data and the second header without executing a program instruction;

providing the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the information to the external source via at least one same bus line without executing a program instruction;

loading into an input message queue a pointer to a location of the raw data within the first memory; and

wherein retrieving the raw data comprises retrieving the raw data from the location using the pointer.

48. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

receiving from an external source with a circuit a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information identifying at least one but not all hardwired pipelines disposed in the circuit;

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extracting the raw data from the message;
loading the extracted raw data into a first memory;
retrieving the extracted raw data from the first memory;
generating, from the information, an identifier indicating the at least one but not all hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address;
processing the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with the at least one hardwired pipeline identified by the identifier information—without executing a program instruction;
loading the processed data from the hardwired pipeline into a second memory;
generating a second header having information indicating a destination of the processed data;
retrieving the processed data from the second memory;
generating a second message that includes the processed data and the second header;
providing the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the information to the external source via at least one same bus line;
loading into an output message queue a pointer to a location of the processed data within the second memory; and
wherein retrieving the processed data comprises retrieving the processed data from the location using the pointer.

49. (Original) The method of claim 44, further comprising setting parameters for loading and retrieving the raw data, processing the retrieved data, and loading and providing the processed data.

50. (Original) The method of claim 44, further comprising determining whether an error occurs during the loading and retrieving of the raw data, the processing of the retrieved data, and the loading and providing of the processed data.

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51. – 65. (Cancelled)

66 (Previously Presented) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the memory, including processing pipelines, and operable:

to receive a message that includes data and that includes a header having information specifying at least one but not all of the pipelines disposed in the hardwired pipeline circuit by receiving the data and the information on at least one common bus line,

to extract the data from the message,

to load the extracted data into the memory,

to retrieve the extracted data from the memory,

to process the retrieved data with the at least one pipeline specified by the information without executing a program instruction,

to provide the processed data to an external source,

to extract from the header the information specifying the at least one pipeline;

to generate from the extracted information an identifier without referencing a virtual address that identifies the specified pipeline;

to store the identifier in association with the data; and

to provide the retrieved data to the pipeline in response to the stored identifier.

67. (Previously Presented) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the memory, including at least one processing pipeline, and operable:

to receive a message that includes data and that includes a header having information uniquely indicating each of at least one pipeline by receiving the data and the information on at least one common bus line,

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to extract the data from the message,
to load the extracted data into the memory,
to retrieve the extracted data from the memory,
to process the retrieved data with the at least one pipeline indicated
by the information without executing a program instruction,
to provide the processed data to an external source,
to extract from the header the information indicating the destination
of the data,
to generate from the extracted information an identifier that
identifies the pipeline corresponding to the destination without retrieving a virtual
address,
to store a pointer to the extracted data,
to store the identifier in association with the pointer, and
to provide the retrieved data to the pipeline in response to the
stored pointer and identifier.

68. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the memory, including at least one
processing pipeline, and operable, without executing a program instruction:
to receive a message that includes data and that includes a header
having information uniquely identifying each of at least one pipeline,
to extract the data from the message,
to load the extracted data into the memory,
to retrieve the extracted data from the memory,
to generate, from the information, an identifier indicating the at least
one pipeline without using a virtual address,
to process the retrieved data, in response to the identifier, with the
at least one pipeline identified by the identifier information,
to provide the processed data to an external source,
to extract from the header the information,

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to store a pointer to the extracted data in a location associated with the pipeline corresponding to the destination, and
to provide the retrieved data to the pipeline in response to the stored pointer.

69. (Previously Presented) The pipeline accelerator of claim 7 wherein the hardwired pipeline circuit is further operable to:

store in association with the processed data second information indicating the destination of the processed data;

generate the message header in response to the second information.

70. (Previously Presented) The pipeline accelerator of claim 69 wherein the second information equals the first information.

71. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:

a memory; and

a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the memory and operable, without executing a program instruction:

to receive data without receiving, with the data, information corresponding to a post processing destination of the data,

to generate an identifier indicating at least one processing pipeline without referencing a virtual address,

to process the received data in response to the identifier with the at least one processing pipeline,

to load the processed data into the memory,

to retrieve the processed data from the memory,

to generate a message header that includes first information indicating a destination of the processed data ~~without using a virtual address,~~

to generate a message that includes the processed data and the header,

to provide the message to an external source,

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to store a pointer to the processed data,
to store in association with the pointer second information indicating the destination of the processed data,
to retrieve the processed data in response to the pointer, and
to generate the message header in response to the second information.

72. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
a memory; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the memory and operable, without executing a program instruction:

to receive data without receiving, with the data, information corresponding a post processing destination of the data,

to generate an identifier indicating at least one processing pipeline without using a virtual address,

to process the received data in response to the identifier with the at least one processing pipeline,

to load the processed data into the memory,

to retrieve the processed data from the memory,

to generate a message header that includes first information indicating a destination of the processed data ~~without referencing a virtual address,~~

to generate a message that includes the processed data and the header,

to provide the message to an external source,

to store a pointer to the processed data in a location associated with the destination of the processed data,

to retrieve the processed data in response to the pointer, and

to generate the message header in response to the location

73. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:

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first and second memories;

a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and comprising:

an input data handler operable to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information uniquely indicating each of at least one hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory ~~without first retrieving a virtual address corresponding to the uniquely indicated at least one hardwired pipeline,~~

at least one hardwired pipeline operable to process data without executing a program instruction,

a pipeline interface operable to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, generate from the information an identifier indicating the at least one hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address, provide in response to the indicator the retrieved raw data to the at least one hardwired pipeline indicated by the information indicator, and load processed data from the indicated at least one hardwired pipeline into the second memory, and

an output data handler operable to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having first information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source by providing the processed data and the first information to the external source via at least one same bus line;

wherein the input data handler is further operable:

to extract from the header the information indicating the destination of the data,

to generate from the extracted information an identifier that identifies the pipeline corresponding to the destination, and

to store the identifier in association with the data; and

wherein the pipeline interface is further operable to provide the retrieved data to the pipeline in response to the stored identifier.

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74. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
first and second memories; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and
comprising:

an input data handler operable to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information uniquely specifying each of at least one hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory,

at least one hardwired pipeline operable to process data without executing a program instruction,

a pipeline interface operable to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, generate from the information an identifier specifying the at least one hardwired pipeline without using a virtual address, provide in response to the indicator the retrieved raw data to the specified at least one hardwired pipeline without using a virtual address, and load processed data from the specified at least one hardwired pipeline into the second memory, and

an output data handler operable to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having first information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source,

wherein the input data handler is further operable:

to extract from the header the information indicating the destination of the data;

to generate from the extracted information an identifier that identifies the pipeline corresponding to the destination,

to store a pointer to the extracted data, and

to store the identifier in association with the pointer; and

wherein the pipeline interface is further operable to provide the retrieved data to the pipeline in response to the stored pointer and identifier.

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75. (Currently Amended) A pipeline accelerator, comprising:
first and second memories; and
a hardwired pipeline circuit coupled to the first and second memories and
comprising:

an input data handler operable, without executing a program instruction, to receive from an external source a first message that includes raw data and that includes a first header having information indicating at least one hardwired pipeline, to extract the raw data from the message, and to load the raw data into the first memory,

at least one hardwired pipeline including the indicated at least one hardwired pipeline and at least one other hardwired pipeline, at least the indicated at least one hardwired pipeline operable, without executing a program instruction, to process data,

a pipeline interface operable, without executing a program instruction, to retrieve the raw data from the first memory, to generate from the information an identifier indicating the at least one hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address, to provide in response to the indicator the retrieved raw data to the indicated at least one hardwired pipeline without referencing a virtual address, and to load processed data from the indicated at least one hardwired pipeline into the second memory, and

an output data handler operable, without executing a program instruction, to retrieve the processed data from the second memory, to generate a second header having first information indicating a destination of the processed data, to generate a second message that includes the processed data and the second header, and to provide the second message to the external source;

wherein the input data handler is further operable, without executing a program instruction:

to extract from the header the information indicating the destination of the data, and